CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1 1. A method of authenticating a user attempting to access a portable
2 computing device comprising:
3 causing a sequence of images to be shown on a display;
4 accepting an input selection from the user indicating that a currently
5 displayed image of the sequence of images corresponds to a portion of the
6 user's password, the user's password being known by the portable computing
7 device;
8 correlating the input selection to the currently displayed image; and
9 allowing access to the portable computing device when the input selection
10 and the currently displayed image temporally correspond to the portion of the
11 user's password.
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1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the password comprises a plurality of
2 portions, and further comprising repeating the causing, accepting and correlating
3 for each of the plurality of password portions, and allowing access to the portable
4 computing device when all input selections correlated to displayed images
5 temporally correspond to the password.
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1 3. The method of claim 1, wherein causing the sequence of images to be
2 shown on a display comprises sending the sequence of images over a wireless
3 link to a computing system including the display.
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1 4. The method of claim 1, further comprising setting the user password in
2 the portable computing device prior to causing the sequence of images to be
3 shown on the display.
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1   5. The method of claim 1, wherein each image of the sequence of images

2   comprises a plurality of symbols, the symbols comprising at least one of

3   alphanumeric characters, playing card values, sports team logos, company

4   logos, cartoon characters, and photographs, and each password portion

5   comprises at least one symbol.

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1   6. The method of claim 1, further comprising causing the display of visual

2   feedback to the user when a portion of the user's password is correctly selected.

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1   7. The method of claim 1, wherein the display is part of a computing

2   system un-trusted by the user.

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1   8. The method of claim 7, further comprising establishing an

2   authenticated connection from the portable computing device to the un-trusted

3   computing system including the display prior to causing the sequence of images

4   to be shown on the display.

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1   9. An article comprising: a storage medium having a plurality of machine

2   readable instructions, wherein when the instructions are executed by a

3   processor, the instructions provide for authenticating a user attempting to access

4   a portable computing device by

5   causing a sequence of images to be shown on a display;

6   accepting an input selection from the user indicating that a currently

7   displayed image of the sequence of images corresponds to a portion of the

8   user's password, the user's password being known by the portable computing

9   device;

10   correlating the input selection to the currently displayed image; and

11   allowing access to the portable computing device when the input selection

12   and the currently displayed image temporally correspond to the portion of the

13   user's password.

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1   10. The article of claim 9, wherein the password comprises a plurality of
2 portions, and further comprising instructions for repeating the causing, accepting
3 and correlating for each of the plurality of password portions, and instructions for
4 allowing access to the portable computing device when all input selections
5 correlated to displayed images temporally correspond to the password.
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1   11. The article of claim 9, wherein instructions for causing the sequence
2 of images to be shown on a display comprises instructions for sending the
3 sequence of images over a wireless link to a computing system including the
4 display.
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1   12. The article of claim 9, further comprising instructions for setting the
2 user password in the portable computing device prior to causing the sequence of
3 images to be shown on the display.
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1   13. The article of claim 9, wherein each image of the sequence of images
2 comprises a plurality of symbols, the symbols comprising at least one of
3 alphanumeric characters, playing card values, sports team logos, company
4 logos, cartoon characters, and photographs, and each password portion
5 comprises at least one symbol.
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1   14. The article of claim 9, further comprising instructions for causing the
2 display of visual feedback to the user when a portion of the user's password is
3 correctly selected.
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1   15. The article of claim 9, further comprising instructions for establishing
2 an authenticated connection from the portable computing device to an un-trusted
3 computing system including the display prior to causing the sequence of images
4 to be shown on the display.
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1   16. A portable computing device comprising:

2   a memory to store instructions and data;

3   a processor to execute the instructions obtained from the memory to

4   cause a sequence of images to be shown on a display of an un-trusted

5   computing system, to accept an input selection from a user indicating that a

6   currently displayed image of the sequence of images corresponds to a portion of

7   the user's password, the user's password being known by the portable

8   computing device, to correlate the input selection to the currently displayed

9   image; and to allow access to the portable computing device when the input

10 selection and the currently displayed image temporally correspond to the portion

11 of the user's password.

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1   17. The portable computing device of claim 16, wherein the portable

2   computing device comprises a wireless communications module for sending the

3   sequence of images to be shown on the display over a wireless link to the un-

4   trusted computing system.

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1   18. The portable computing device of claim 16, wherein each image of

2   the sequence of images comprises a plurality of symbols, the symbols

3   comprising at least one of alphanumeric characters, playing card values, sports

4   team logos, company logos, cartoon characters, and photographs, and each

5   password portion comprises at least one symbol.

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1   19. The portable computing device of claim 16, wherein the memory

2   further comprises instructions to establish an authenticated connection from the

3   portable computing device to the un-trusted computing system prior to causing

4   the sequence of images to be shown on the display.

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1   20. The portable computing device of claim 16, further comprising a

2   button for entering the input selection by the user, the button indicating one of

3   activation and non-activation.

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1   21. The portable computing device of claim 16, wherein the memory

2   stores the user's password and the sequence of images.